Amendments to the Claims:

The following claims will replace all prior versions of the claims in this application:

1-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently amended) A file level striping method employing a file system and a volume manager, the method comprising the steps of:

adding an option for indicating whether or not to support file level striping to the file creation interface in the file system;

extending an inode structure to include a last disk ID field for identifying the last disk in which a physical block allocation was made;

initializing the last disk ID when a file is created in the file system;

allocating a physical block based on the last disk ID when a physical block allocation is required at the time of file I/O request in the file system; and

modifying the last disk ID value to reflect the disk in which the physical block allocation was made by the volume manager.

5. (Original) The file level striping method of claim 4, said step of initializing the last disk ID comprising further the steps of :

determining whether the bit for designating file level striping is set in a mode given as an option when a file is created in the file system;

selecting a random integer in the range of the number of disks participating in the logical volume to set the last disk ID value; and

setting the last disk ID value to -1 if said bit is not set meaning that the file does not support the file level striping.

6. (Original) The file level striping method of claim 5, wherein the random integer is selected to prevent the data block allocation being concentrated to a disk corresponding to the initial value the last disk ID when the initial values of the last disk ID of all the files supporting the file level striping are set constant at a specific value.

7. (Original) The file level striping method of claim 4, wherein said option is formed by adding a bit to the mode which is given as an option of the file creation interface.

8. (Currently amended) The file level striping method of claim 4, wherein said step of allocation a physical block and said step of modifying the last disk ID value further comprising the steps of:

requesting a file I/O operation;

determining which logical block corresponds to the requested file 1/0 operation;

requesting the volume manager or a lower level I/O system to perform said determined logical block I/O operation;

performing an address mapping process in order to determine which disk and which physical block therein correspond to said logical block;

performing I/O operation for the physical block determined to correspond to said logical block at the address mapping process;

checking the value of the last disk ID of the inode corresponding to the file if physical block allocation turns out to be required since the logical block is used for the first time at the address mapping process;

selecting the disk of a number next to the value of last disk ID ~~601~~ if the value of the last disk ID ~~601~~ turns out to be in the range from 0 to the number of the disks associated with the logical volume minus 1;

performing physical block allocation referring to the free space bitmap of said selected disk;

updating the mapping table with the allocation result and performing I/O operation for the file on the physical block;

changing the value of the last disk ID if I/O operation on the physical block is completed; and

performing I/O operations repeatedly on the physical block for the physical block allocation to be distributed uniformly across the whole disks.

9. (Currently amended) The file level striping method of claim 8, wherein said method further comprising the step of selecting a disk in which block allocation to be performed

referring to a . variable for determining the disk in which the next physical block allocation to be performed if the value of the last disk ID ~~601~~ turns out -1 at said checking step.

10. (Original) The file level striping method of claim 8, wherein said method further comprising the step of setting the last disk ID value to be the ID of the disk in which block allocation is made only if physical block allocation is done and the last disk ID value for the file is not -1.